

COCA TIMES

COIN OPERATED COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 16
ISSUE 2
July, 2011
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Gravity Vendor

The Nuts & Bolts of the Simplest Vendor



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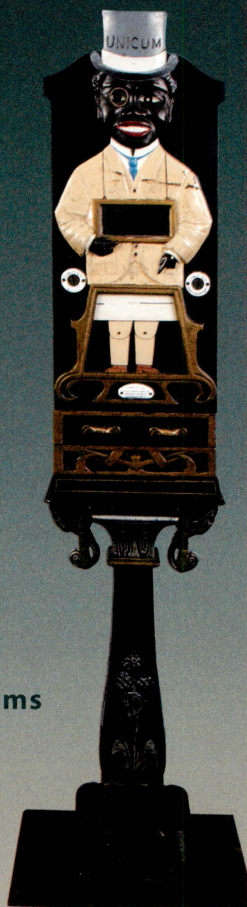
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Message from Our President

It has been a busy spring season for your association. Our web site committee, headed by Bill Petrochuk, is working full speed to create and install a new site for our use. Bill advises he and the committee hope to install many improvements to our site, including but not limited to a larger non-member area to attract new members, an ability for new members to complete a form and pay their dues via Pay Pal, a new classified ad section that anyone can read or post an ad on (with only COCA members being able to view the contact information) and a host of other betterments. In addition, our Chicagoland show meeting in April was well attended and those who came enjoyed some great food and a wonderful presentation on the history of ABT Corporation by Roger Hilden.

Craig and Doreen Bierman are working hard to make the upcoming COCA 2011 Convention a memorable one. The convention will be held in Houston, Texas on September 16, 17 and 18, 2011. Details, including registration and hotel information are available on the COCA web site.

The upcoming fall 2011 show meeting will include a trip to Jasper's the evening of Friday, November 11th, so plan to attend if you can. If you are going to stay at the St. Charles Hilton Garden Inn, please remember to make your room reservations with the hotel itself (630-584-0700) if possible and tell them you are a COCA member when making the reservation. It is also a good idea to remind them of your COCA membership when checking in and out. The association will then get credit for your room nights, which helps us negotiate better deals for COCA members.

In my Spring, 2011 President's letter, I reminded everyone that our association is always looking for ways to grow. This growth brings new people into our hobby, which benefits your association and benefits all of us as collectors and/or dealers. As an example, David Cook and I were pleased to host the Antique Toy Collectors of America (ATCA) convention in our homes earlier this spring. We each had two full bus loads of ATCA members enjoy our collections and we hope to convert some of their members to COCA members. They were in awe of the variety of coin operated machines that are available to collect and really felt that our hobby is closely related to theirs.

Last but not least, I want to remind everyone that our association is what we make it. The benefits of COCA membership are provided to all members through the hard work and dedication of the associations directors, officers, committees and a host of volunteers. Our officer elections will be held at the November meeting and we are currently without candidates for the positions of treasurer and recording secretary. If you are interested in serving in one of those positions, please call or email me at your earliest opportunity. The individuals now occupying those positions are subject to term limits and cannot run again. In addition, we are in need of cover and other articles for the COCA Times Magazine. If you have any coin op stories, adventures, research or other materials and pictures that we can use in the magazine, please contact Randy Razzoog or me.

I hope to see you at the 2011 convention in Houston and at Jasper's in November.

Erick Johnson
COCA President
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**DEADLINE FOR
NEXT ISSUE:
August 12, 2011**

The Nuts and Bolts of the Simplest Vendor



Roger Smith

The Story of the Gravity Vendor

All collectors have had a ‘frozen’ machine whose vending wheel has become rusted and inoperable or a coin mechanism that refuses to recognize a coin and release the chain of events that leads to vending the product. Over the many years that vendors have vied for the loose change of shoppers, a myriad of mechanisms have been invented, patented, and produced to detect a coin and deliver a product. These have ranged from simple mechanisms where the coin provides a missing link in the chain of forces or events to free the device, to those that use other elements to detect the presence of the required coin and unlock the prize. It seems the more complex the mechanism, the more opportunities for problems. While many of these vendors use the forces of gravity, no vendor has ever harnessed this force in the same or more elegantly simple way than the vendor that has no moving parts; the Gravity Vendor.

The story of the Gravity Vendor and its inventor leads us to an inventing polymath from Chicago, Illinois, and the turn of the last century when vending and chewing gum were undergoing dramatic changes in popularity and form.

An Era for Invention

The turn of the last century was a time of almost explosive innovation, invention and optimism. Chicago’s White City created for the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition had demonstrated that America could compete with Europe in industrial strength, artistic expression and originality. Optimism and a robust economy had resulted in disposable income, creating the first real “con-



sumers.” Vending machines fit nicely into this era of optimism providing novelty, convenience and commodities on demand, and were featured novelties at fairs and exhibitions around the country. Arguably, the first vendor to achieve

any level of commercial adoption was the British Honor Box. This early vendor made its appearance in the



pubs of England and was the first vendor to enjoy both wide distribution and a degree of longevity. Designed to dispense pipe tobacco, this brass vendor relied on the “honor” of the patron to take only the amount paid for, to re-close the access door unlocked by the coin and to pass it to the next patron.

In the United States, the early vending industry is often traced to the vendors introduced to the elevated railroads of New York City to sell Adams’ new chicle-based chewing gum and to the growing number of cigar vendors that made their appearance in shops across the country. Novel, always on duty, and guaranteed not to steal the proceeds of a sale from the store owner, vending machines caught





on with both buyers and sellers alike. Despite the variety of goods available from these vendors, their reliability was often the source of frustration when mechanisms jammed and the promised product failed to appear. The earliest forms of coin detection and merchandise delivery were notoriously unreliable. Poor designs, inexpensive materials (for some vendors), the ravages of weather

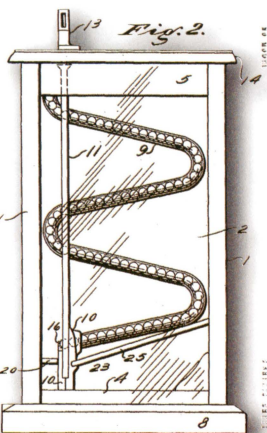
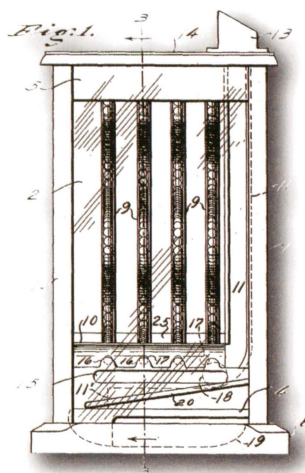
(for those vendors placed in exposed locations), and salty peanuts or pistachios resulted in frozen mechanisms and frustrated customers. This resulted in countless design revisions and many patents for coin operated machines between the late 1800s and the start of World War I. What could be better than a vendor that couldn't be vulnerable to these problems? A vendor with absolutely no moving parts? Enter the Gravity Vendor.

The Gravity Vendor

The Gravity Vendor has to be the simplest vendor ever produced. With no moving part to get out of adjustment it would seem to have been infallible. This rare vendor was patented in 1903. Some machines indicate that they were produced by the Gravity Vending Machine Company of Chicago, Illinois, and distributed by Wagner & Miller, of Sandusky, Ohio.

Made of chrome and glass, this machine consisted of three or four glass tubes that held the product, a simple coin entry at the top and a coin raceway that ran across the face of the machine. The machine was made to sell

small round balls of either breath mints or chewing gum which were held single file in the glass tubes. The lowest ball in the line rested against a stop and was supported by a small shelf with a gap between the stop and the shelf that was less than the width of the product. This gap spanned



the coin raceway and formed the key element that allowed the machine to function.

In use, the coin would drop directly down a chute from the entry point in the top of the machine. At the base of the chute the coin would hit an angled anvil, bounce off and be sent rapidly across the raceway. As the coin shot down the raceway, the top of the coin would meet with the lower edge of the suspended breath mint or gumball, bouncing it upward and free of the pressure of the line of product behind it in the glass tube. Once freed, the mint or gumball fell downward into a collecting tray and out to the waiting customer.



At least three versions of this rare vendor are known: Two versions of mint vendors with four glass tubes and a three tube version that advertised the "latest pepsin gum balls." Each of these three versions have different delivery faces suggesting that once they were produced and placed into service, some of the design's flaws became apparent.

The most complex delivery system is found on what is thought to be the oldest of the three forms. In this four tube breath pellet machine a comb-like delivery port at the bottom of the machine directs the mints to the waiting customer. With a heavy iron base, very simple top and extra heavy glass, this is also the tallest of the three versions known.

The intermediate form is probably the three tube gumball version which hides a funnel-like trough behind the Wagner & Miller advertising plaque. This one carries a paper decal that advertises pepsin gumballs, though there is no indication of the maker of these. It is this version that some have suggested might have been the first vendor to use round gum, instead of the tab or stick forms.

The newest of the three machine versions (from probably around 1904) also uses a simple U-shaped

inclined ramp to deliver the goods. Remarkably, none of the known varieties use an eccentric delivery port and straight ramp as shown in the original



patent drawings (leading to the left side of the machine). Also of interest is the fact that all three known versions have very different coin entries, varying from a simple raised slit, to a decorative escutcheon, and finally to a warded open slot.



Three different coin entries characterize the three known versions, shown here from oldest to newest.

The Inventor

The story of Irving C. Woodward is one of mystery and invention, dogged focus and free-ranging ideas. Irving Woodward was granted patents for more than 30 inven-

tions spanning almost as many years. The first reference to Woodward in the United States Patent Office archives is for a patent covering roller skate axels issued in 1885 to W.H. Peterson and M.C. Henley and witnessed by one Irving Woodward. (It will probably never be known if this was the young inventor getting his first exposure to the patent process or just someone with the same name.) The first patent issued to Irving C. Woodward (the Woodward who is the focus of our interest) was in 1899, when Woodward lived in Iron Mountain, Michigan. This first patent was for a "Nut and Bolt Lock" to prevent nuts from loosening on their bolts. It foreshadowed a lifelong interest that Woodward seemed to have had with locking bolts and nuts, going on to obtain nine different patents for similar devices over the years.

Sometime between May 1898, and November 1900, Woodward moved to Chicago, where he would remain until about 1922 (when he moved to Syracuse, New York). These early years (to 1907) were filled with a wide range of ideas and patents that cover a myriad of seemingly unrelated items. There were patents for storage bags, a combined inkwell and pen wiper, toy guns and ways to keep track of Whist cards. Later patents included a belt for lady's

shirt waists (blouses), patents for parts of mail marking machines (that were eventually acquired by and improved upon by Arthur Pitney of Pitney-Bowes postage meter fame), differential gears and mechanical clutches. The only vending patents issued to Woodward came in 1903 and 1907.

The 1907 vendor patent (patent No. 867,545) dealt with a fairly traditional column vendor for tab gum or chocolates. The intent of the patent, as stated by Woodward, was to improve the reliability of the coin-mechanism, and to do so in a device that could be made inexpensively from sheet metal. Many aspects of this patent are very similar to the 1904 patents issued for the Combination Vendor made by the Combination Vending Company of Penn

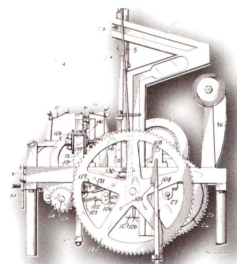
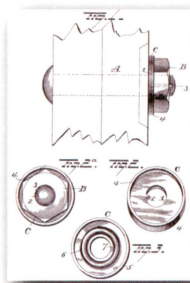
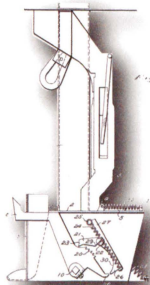
Yan, New York. There was nothing in Woodward's patent that reflected even a fraction of the inventive insight that was evident in the 1903 Gravity Vendor patent. This 1907 patent was assigned to the Merchant's Vending Machine Company of Chicago, Illinois.

The Gravity Vendor, patented in 1903, was truly unique. Nothing before or since seems to have used the idea of the kinetic energy of the coin to do all of the work of vending.

There were "automatic" vending machines that required nothing more from the user than the insertion of the correct coin. These machines all relied on stored energy in the form of a spring that drove a clockwork mechanism freed by the insertion of the coin.

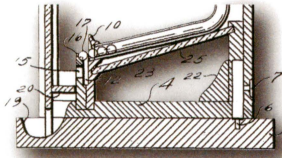
As we have seen above, in the gravity vendor the top of the moving coin does all the work. Nothing before or since has been as simple or as foolproof. It was, in short, an invention for which there appears to have been no precedence. Why, then, did this idea not catch on and why are so few of these machines found today?

There are a number of plausible reasons why these vendors may have been commercial failures. First, despite the simplicity of the machine, the gravity vendor is a finicky machine. Depending on the size



A 1911 patent for an "automatic vending machine"

and weight of the product being vended, the lowest item can be held too tightly against the bumper (number 16 in the patent drawing), so that it is not dislodged by the coin. The opposite can also occur. When the first item in the column is dislodged, the next few can tumble out before one of them firmly occupies the correct location to hold in check the parade of goods held in the glass tubes. If the machine was not level, or it was shaken, one or more mints or gumballs could be obtained without the use of a coin. Indeed, it is the last tendency that makes filling these machines difficult (if you can even find the correct size goods today).



The Mysterious Companies

Another possible explanation for the rarity of these machines may be even simpler: The lack of ties by Woodward to a manufacturing and distribution system. While one version of the gravity machine (the 1904 version) carries a casting proclaiming “Gravity Vending Machine Co.,” there are no records of such a company being incorporated in the state of Illinois. A search of the Chicago City Directories for 1903, 1904 and 1905 similarly comes up with no listing. The machines that exist today all carry an added metal plate with the printed notice “Wagner & Miller, Sandusky, Ohio, Sole agents for North-Eastern Ohio.” Sandusky, Ohio is not exactly where one might expect to find a connection to a Chicago in-

vention or manufacturing company. It is also somewhat mysterious because Ohio State records do not show any

WAGNER & MILLER,

**SANDUSKY, OHIO,
SOLE AGENTS FOR NORTH-EASTERN OHIO.**

record of such a company being incorporated during the period 1900-12, and city directories for the same period have no record of them either.

The Merchant’s Vending Machine Company, to whom Woodward assigned his 1907 vending machine patent, was incorporated in Illinois in 1902, but must also have been a shaky enterprise. Incorporated February 15th, 1902 by Fred W. Bentley, Georges J. Kappes and Orpheus A. Harding with a stated capital stock of \$100,000 (the equivalent of \$2,456,634 in 2008 dollars), the company quickly ran afoul of the state of Illinois. By 1906, the char-

ter of the company was suspended for failing to file the required annual report for that year (or possibly ever) and the Cook County Superior Court dissolved the company (as a part of general clean up campaign by the state) on November 26th, 1926. No listing for the company can be found in Chicago city directories for the period it was supposedly in business. (The Chicago City Directory for 1917 lists a Merchant’s Cooperative Gum Company, located at 706, 111 W. Washington Street, but there is no evidence that this company was in any way related.) Why the only other vending patent by Woodward was assigned to this apparently troubled company may never be known. The patent was filed in June of 1906, so the troubles of the company must have been known at that point. A review of the incorporation documents do not reveal any obvious connections between Woodward and the officers or shareholders of the fledgling company. The most likely explanation is that it was a marriage of convenience – a freelance inventor and a company in need of products.

We know that Irving Woodward did most of his inventing as a freelance enterprise because of his 30 patents, 21 were in his own name, 6 were assigned to corporations and 3 were assigned to other individuals (including one Eugene A. Woodward who was likely a relative). Of the patents assigned to corporations, there were five different companies through the years (1916-1921) including the Woodward Differential Gear Company of Chicago. This last patent was issued only a year before Woodward moved to Syracuse, New York. Chicago directories for 1903 list Irving Woodward as “mngr 1200, 279 Dearborn” and in 1904 as “bds 4065 Ellis av.” By 1910, Chicago directories listed Woodward under “novelties” located at 324 Dearborn, implying multiple moves and changing jobs. All of this would suggest that Woodward had few if any ties to any company and those that he did have may not have been either robust or successful. This may help to explain the use of an Ohio company to act as “sole agents” in the marketing and use of the Gravity Vendor. Not exactly a recipe for commercial success.

There you have it, the history of the simplest vendor invented by an enigmatic inventor with a fascination for nuts and bolts.

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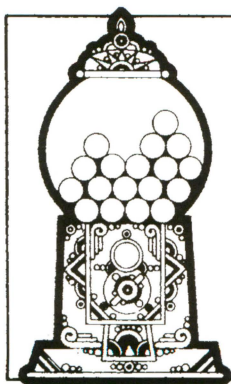
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The Buckley Bones Story by Jack Hamilton

As I'm sure all COCA members do, I am constantly searching for that hidden cache of machines or that rare hidden treasure. Over the years there have been several times when someone has described a machine that sounds very exciting only to have it no longer available or no where near what was described.

For the past 20 or so years, I have been operating an Antique store in the California foothills town of Amador City. For many years longer than that, I have been collecting, restoring and selling antique coin operated devices.

In November 2010, a fellow and his elderly dad came in the store. The older gentleman looked at a mechanical slot machine we had for sale and commented that he had "given one of these to my nephew". Being the eternal optimist, I told him that he shouldn't have given something away that I could have sold. I asked him to tell me about the machine.

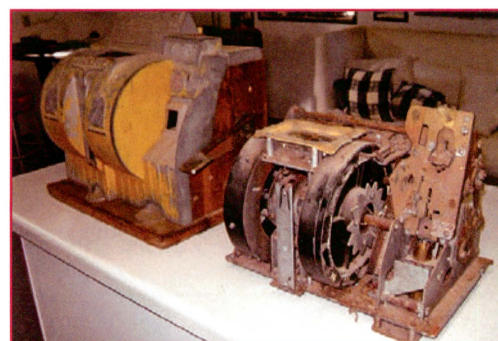
He said that many years ago when he was a young man a friend found it at some sort of estate sale, bought it and stored it on a shelf in his barn. My customer said that he frequently pestered his friend trying to buy the machine as it was just sitting on a shelf collecting dust. After 20 years of it sitting in the barn, his friend finally got fed up with his pestering and told him to take it and get it out of my barn. Now that he has it, he looked at the condition and couldn't decide what to do with it as it wasn't working and was very dirty so he sat it on a shelf in his garage for another 20 years. One day, while cleaning out his garage, he came across the machine that he had put there 20 years earlier and decided to give it to his nephew. OK, so that is the history, now what was the machine? He looked at the slot machines we had in

the store and announced that his was smaller and had a paddle rather than a knob. As with any collector, this really piqued my interest and curiosity. The only thing I could imagine was a Mills QT. I showed him different QTs in Marshall Fey's "Slot Machines." He said, "nope, that isn't close, mine was flatter." All I could think of was something like a Puritan Bell type trade stimulator. After looking at several more pictures, he again said "nope, the dice rattled around in it."

DICE? Now he really had me. I pulled out Tom Gustwiller's "For Amusement Only." After carefully looking at 16 pages of dice machines, he finally turned to the last page and announced loudly, "that's it" pointing to the Bally Reliance Dice machine. My first thought was yeah right and you also gave your nephew the Golden Gate Bridge. Thinking better of that response, I instead told him if that was really what it was, that was a rare machine. He said that he had given his nephew too much other stuff and was going to take it back and bring it here. Again, I thought, yeah along with the bridge but said, "great, I would love to see it." Trying not to be too skeptical, I thought that maybe in a few weeks, I'd get to see whatever he really had.

Three hours later he brought in the machine and set it on the counter. While it had obviously been sitting for over 40 years, it was an almost complete Reliance. After blowing the top layer of dust and crud off, it became evident that I was looking at Reliance with a serial number tag showing #158. It appeared to be all there except for a cash box and a back door. I was very excited but maintained my composure and made him a very generous offer. He accepted, thanked me and went away very pleased.

(Pictures 1 thru 3 are of the machine as found)



While I was restoring the cabinet and castings, I kept looking at the mechanism. After 40 years of sitting on a shelf, it was very dirty and rusty but seemed to be mostly all there. I have a great deal of experience restoring slot machine mechanisms but was hesitant to undertake this one. A friend told me that Johnny Duckworth was an expert on these machines. I called Johnny and was overwhelmed with the extent of his knowledge. While he could have restored the mech, instead he referred me to Jeff Frahm of TwoBit Restorations. Jeff is a premiere restoration source of these and Buckley Bones machines. Check out his web site, twobitrestorations.com. It is impressive!

While Jeff was very busy he agreed to restore the mechanism for me when time permitted. After I finished the cabinet restoration in January, I called Jeff. He said it was OK to send the mech. He asked me to send it in the restored cabinet to ensure everything would line up. I double boxed

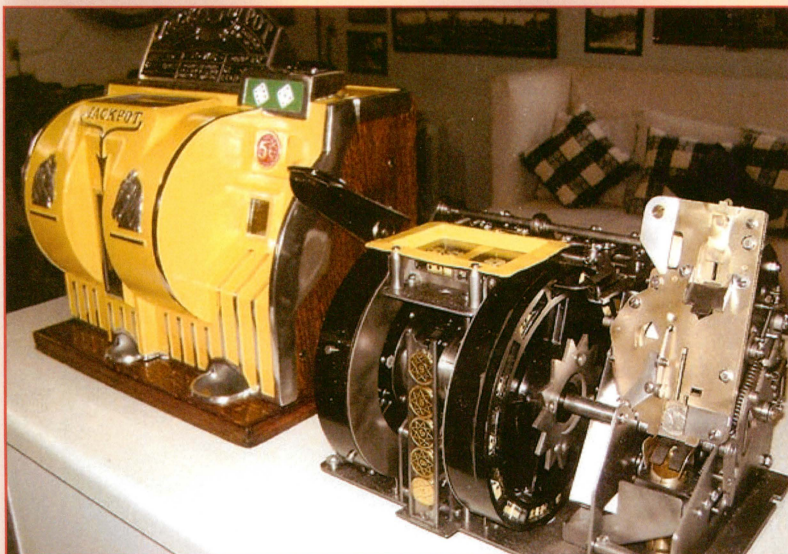
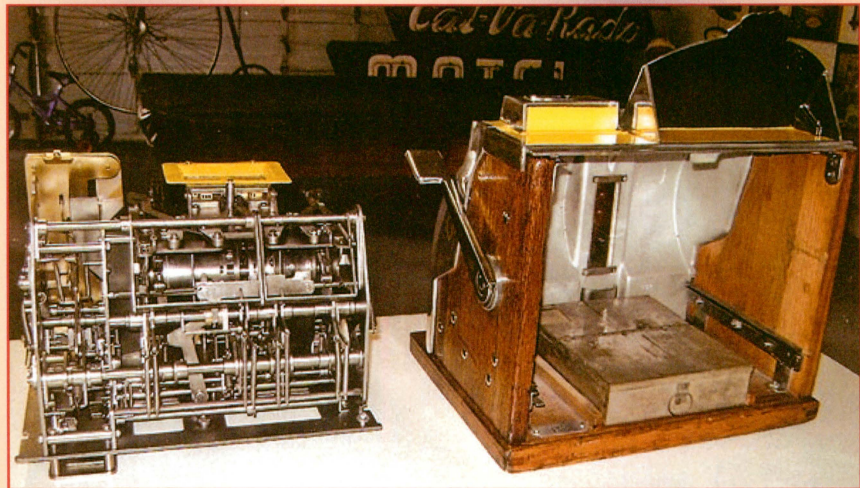
it and sent it FedEx ground from California to Kansas. After 5 days, Jeff let me know it arrived in very good shape. Now it was time for me to relax and wait.

A month later, Jeff emailed me and said it was done. After another worrisome 5 days of bouncing around in a truck, it arrived in the same boxes I had used to send it originally. It was literally now like new.

In addition to acknowledging Jeff's support, I also greatly appreciate:

- Johnny Duckworth for the back door paper, restoration assistance from Jeff and being a tremendous information resource for me.
- Alan Sax for the Jackpot tokens.
- Jack Brinks for the back door.

*Here it is....
(pictures 4 thru 6)*



O.D. Jennings Combination Candy & Scale Machine

Circa 1935

by Jim & Merlyn Collings

Ode D. Jennings created his first “Big Head” scale in 1919. His early “Big Head” scale had a resemblance to the Caille Bros. and Mills Novelty Co. “Big Head” scales. Harry W. Barson designed the early Jennings “Premier” scale. It is somewhat difficult to distinguish the difference between the early Jennings “Premier” and the Caille “Aristocrat” and the Mills “Accurate” (Photo 1).

Around 1914 Harry Barson was hired as Chief Engineer for the O.D. Jennings Co. (which was then called the Industry Novelty Co.). Mr. Barson developed a “beam” scale and a “dial” scale, which remained in their line for several years. By 1920 O.D. Jennings had become a well recognized company. The company also made slot machines, trade stimulators, gum & mint vendors and coin-operated radios. They moved to a larger facility on West Lake St. in Chicago. At this time the scales were given a greater porcelain finish and a more durable spring mechanism.

By 1931 men’s and women’s weight charts were added to the face. They also created a “mirrored” face on the “Premier” model. And for \$10.00 more made a visible model. This visible model allowed the patron to observe the “inner workings” of the scale mechanism. By the mid 1930’s other coin-operated scales were developed including the Candy and Weight Scale Combination (Photo 2).

For 1 cent the patrons could weigh themselves or purchase a small package of candy or confection. The scale has 2 chrome coin slots. The top one is for the weight; the bottom one is for the candy (Photo 3). Written on the rectangular case is: “TASTY TREATS” “Deposit Coin”, “Pull Handle On Right Side”, “Receive Candy Below”, “Turn Knob To Select”. On the scale face is written in white on red: “YOUR TRUE WEIGHT”.

The “Combination Scale and Candy Vendor” has a similar face and mechanism to the earlier Jennings “Premier” scale. The rectangular blue cabinet is 72-1/2” high and 19” in width. The top of the scale is slightly pitched giving it a roof-like appearance.

Photo 4 shows the interior portion or vending mechanism where the small sweets are loaded. Six windows or compartments are used to display the candies. Also shown is the chrome vending cover or door.

The side view in Photo 5 shows the white porcelain base and platform. Inscribed on the footplate is: “Manufactured by O.D. Jennings, Chicago.”

Photo 6 shows the front of the instruction booklet on how to operate the “JENNINGS COMBINATION SELECTIVE VENDOR AND SCALE”. Thanks to Jeff Storck, a real scale aficionado, we were able to share this article with our fellow coin-op collectors. This is an extremely rare and scarce COMBINATION SCALE and CANDY VENDOR.



Photo 1

Happy Scale Collecting!



Photo 2



Photo 3

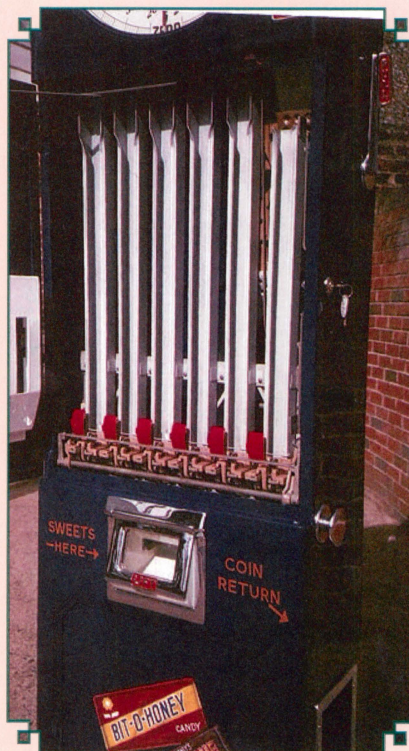


Photo 4

More photos on next page°



Photo 5

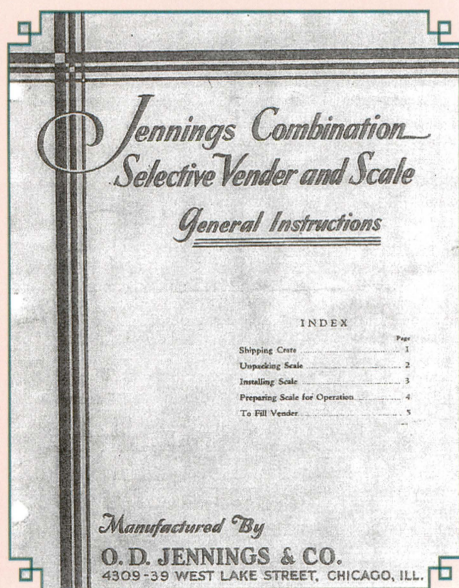


Photo 6

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Humpty Dumpty

by Bill Howard



Prior to an Atlantic City Antique Show approximately ten years ago, about the only thing known regarding this wonderful arcade machine came from its display in the red 1931 Exhibit Supply catalogue, where it is described as "the penny swallowing clown". It was advertised as "an attractive new machine that furnishes lots of amusement for all," with "only a few moveable parts - nothing to wear or get out of order." Priced at \$150.00, or \$130.00 without a base, Humpty stood 7'6" tall, 20" wide and 21" deep, with a new weight of 135 pounds. It was originally introduced by Exhibit in the late 1920's.

Until that Atlantic city show, no known examples had surfaced. There John Johnson offered an original in his booth that went "under the radar". When he then took it to Chicagoland a month later, Bob Lintz purchased it and did a wonderful restoration before unveiling it in his living room at a party I attended. For years thereafter, I admired it as one of the most stunning arcade machines in appearance, as well as one of the most enjoyable to play.

Some years later, a partially original without a base surfaced at an auction. Sadly, I was the under bidder.

Until recently when Bob sold his original to restorer-replicator, or Doug Dubena, known affectionately to his friends as "Smiley", these were the only two known examples.

Smiley has replicated eleven Humpty Dumpty arcades for public sale that were on display at the Fall, 2010, Chicagoland Show. Three are already spoken for as of the date of this writing. Smiley's work has spoken for itself over time. Over the last 35 years he has worked closely with the Don of Westlake, Ohio, Mike Gorski, on a number of projects. As he has often said, "I learned from the best," and the workmanship he has put into the Humpty replication shows it. He explained that the most challenging part of this project was in creating the wood stampings on the front of this ornate machine.

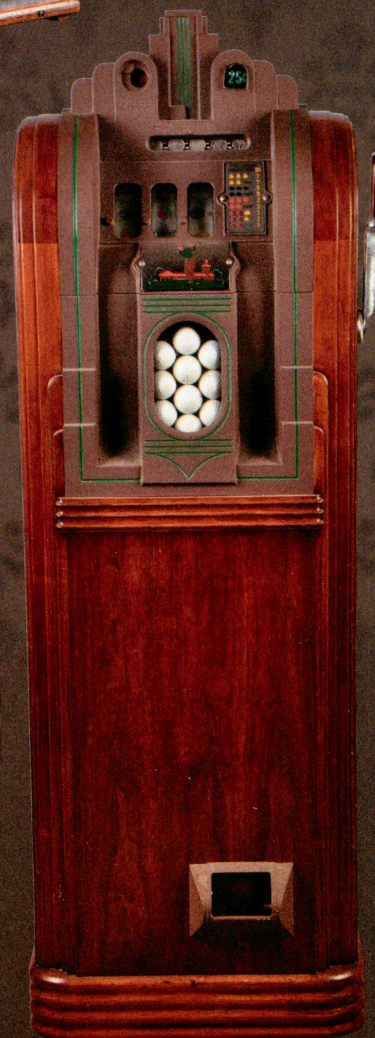
To play the machine, a penny is deposited and drops into the clown's hand in back of the glass. The player then pushes up sharply on the knob in the lower opening, causing the coin to flip out of the clown's hand and into the air. If the play is skillful, the penny drops in his mouth, causing a ball to ring via a battery. The player then pushes a button to stop the ringing and return the penny. I believe that this extra device of causing a bell to ring until the button was pushed allowed the operator to give out cash or price rewards for skillful play. I also believe the machine could be adjusted to affect the degree of difficulty in catching the penny. Smiley actually went to the trouble of buying old door bells in an effort to replicate the exact sound of the bells in the originals. He also claims he utilized the Godfather's face as an inspiration in replicating the clown's head. The unique paper mache hat tops off the machine's look, just like Exhibit pictured it in its catalogue.

Thanks to Smiley's efforts, a few more collectors will have the chance to play, display and enjoy this rare and wonderful floor model arcade.

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The Odd **HOD** **CLOD**

by John Peterson

Photo A



Now deceased author Bill Enes had a section in his encyclopedic books, *Silent Salesman* and *Silent Salesman Too* entitled "Mystery Machines." As the title might suggest, this section featured coin-operated vending machines that were extant but of unknown manufacture. Normally presented in large full color pictures, these vendors delighted the collector society at large with the implicit challenge: Are you smarter than the experts? Do you recognize this piece? Several of the "Mystery Machines" presented in *Silent Salesman* were identified in the later book, *Silent Salesman Too* because of that very challenge; a collector recognized the machine and properly identified it. This is one way a hobby expands its repository of information: through the composite knowledge of its members.

If one were ever foolish enough to attempt a similar encyclopedic approach to British arcade games, there could never be a section entitled "Mystery Machines." Why? Half the machines pictured would be in that section! And that would include today's showcased game, *Hod Clod*.

Photo A is *Hod Clod*. It is a fairly simple game to play. You place a large 1D penny into the coin slot. The penny drops straight down to rest on the chrome ledge mid-field, right side. The coin flip mechanism, seen on the right side directly below the coin entry, is horizontal as opposed to the more traditional coin-flip games which have a vertical launcher. With *Hod Clod*, you push the lever sideways to the right, and release. The spring-loaded bar launches the coin up the short ramp and across the playfield. You are shooting for the fisherman's chrome "bag." If you are successful, all the coins in the bag, from a minimum of one to a maximum of six are released into the payout cup at the bottom. If you miss the bag, the coin drops down and rolls into the bottom "out" hole directly below the catch bag.

One of the more clever features of the game pertains to the coins that miss the bag, as most do. Coins that drop into the "out" hole are alternately directed between the bottom of the case (for the operator,) and filling the "bag." Once six coins are in the bag, meaning 12 consecutive losing coins have been played, the bag automatically opens and rewards the player six coins.

Hod Clod has all the ear-markings of a classic: quaint scenic backflash (Photo B,) great graphics on the cast pieces (Photos C and D,) and a compelling simple payout. So, who made it? When? And why so few remaining?

Photo B



Photo C



Photo D



Please note that in addition to rewarding the punter six coins, Hod Clod has rewarded the operator an equal number of pennies, six. Remember, a winning shot opens the bags immediately. Your reward will be at least one penny (the one you shot) up to a total of six, five in the bag plus your winning shot. I think you will agree, this is a most ingenious game.

Let's start with the last question first. Although I am sure this list is not complete, I know of three existing Hod Clod games. I have one, and I know of two others in England. I'm sure there are several more out there, hidden in British collections. So, let's say there are at least half a dozen of these charmers still standing. Why

not more? Let's take a closer look at my game for possible answers.

Photo E is the inside of the game. Note that the back of my game is steel. Remember this for later. Of the other two games of which I am familiar, both have wood backs. My game sports the very attractive "showman's paint." This is a later alter-

nation, not uncommon with games that have been on the circuit for many years. But look inside at Photo F. This tiger stripe pattern on the inside board is not common to original manufactured games. It strongly sug-



Photo F

gests that my Hod Clod was created from parts taken from other games being dismantled. A kind of Frankenstein, if you will. It may even be that mine is the prototype, given that a steel back was not necessary for the structural strength of the machine and was an unnecessary expense.

Date of manufacture? Photo G (see next page) is a separate cardboard fragment I found behind my instruction card. "Brewers' and Allied Trader's Exhibition and Market?" Their "Hop Competition?" It sure would have been nice had the fragment included a date, but I obviously had some historical material with which to work. On the internet, I discovered a link between the "Brewers', et. al" and a current group, the BFBI: the Brewing, Food & Beverage Industry Suppliers Association. I wrote to the president of the association and received the following reply:



Photo E

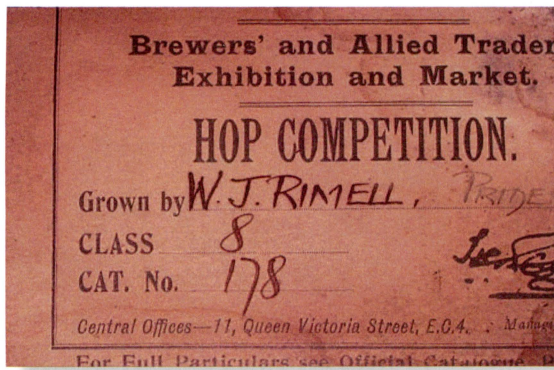


Photo G

"Hello John. I have looked through our records and can see no reference to 11 Queen Victoria Street, EC4 – we did live at Laurence Pountney House, Cannon Street, EC4 between 1907 and 1961. Don't know if this helps. The Brewers' & Trades Exhibition was organized jointly by ABTA (our previous name,) Institute of Brewing and Guild of Brewing – the address would have been a registered address for the actual organizing committee of the competitions and was probably the address of our auditors of the day. Unfortunately, all paperwork associated with the exhibition has gone the way of most things and ended up as ashes. Best regards, Ruth."

You will agree; a very nice response but of no help whatsoever. Which brings us to the next method of analysis: the Gestalt of the game. Look at the design of the case, and the topflash built into the case. Remind you of some other game? "Conveyor," perhaps?

Stevenson & Lovett, Ltd. of London produced a small number of games starting after World War II and continuing into the 1950's. Their styling was quite distinctive, including cases very similar to Hod Clod with the name enclosed in the top of the case. In addition, Conveyor, has a steel back due to the structural requirements of the heavy weight of the electric mechanism. At this point, I'm leaning heavily toward Stevenson & Lovett. Hod Clod would be a post-WWII machine made from parts of games they had lying about, theirs and games of other manufacturers. For reasons unknown, perhaps the difficulty of winning, the game never achieved popular success with the players and was manufactured in very small numbers. This would help explain why so few survived; there were not that many originally. This conclusion is also supported by markings I found on my game during restoration. There are two "No. 5" markings in chalk, one of the inside bottom of the

mechanism door and the other inside the case. There is a "V" on the back of the payout face-plate. I deduce from these markings that my game was the fifth machine produced. If they were marking the machines by hand, the operation was the antithesis of what we would regard today as mass production.

Does this analysis sound reasonable? I'm still having a little trouble resolving the contradiction between the style of the game, which seems to be post-WWII and the cast pieces, which look to me to be from the 1920's or 1930's, significantly earlier.

I give the final word to Freddy Bailey, British Coin Machine Historian. He wrote the following to the man who sold me Hod Clod.

"Hi,

I watch with great interest the comments made about your machine. Firstly the word Clod is a slang word used by British traveling Showmen (Carny People in the U.S.) it means Penny. This machine seems to me to be a home made machine, possibly made by a traveling showman. My Father made several different machines that were not for mass production. Also only the French wall machine manufacturers painted their machines. Both the British and French Traveling Showmen painted their wall machines during the winter recess from Traveling. Also the back is made of steel, not used in a production machine. Stevenson and Lovet only made 4 wall machines as production models, those were the Conveyor in 1945, Fireworks in 1946 and Fourth Bridge and Sky Jump in 1950. There was a shortage of steel after World War II, I date your machine around 1951, you cannot rule out that this was made by Stevenson & Lovet as a prototype. Great Machine.

Freddy Bailey

British Coin Machine Historian"

Until further information arises that refutes the above, I rest my case. We can all agree on one thing: this is one terrific little odd game.

John Peterson

Your American Odditorium Curator

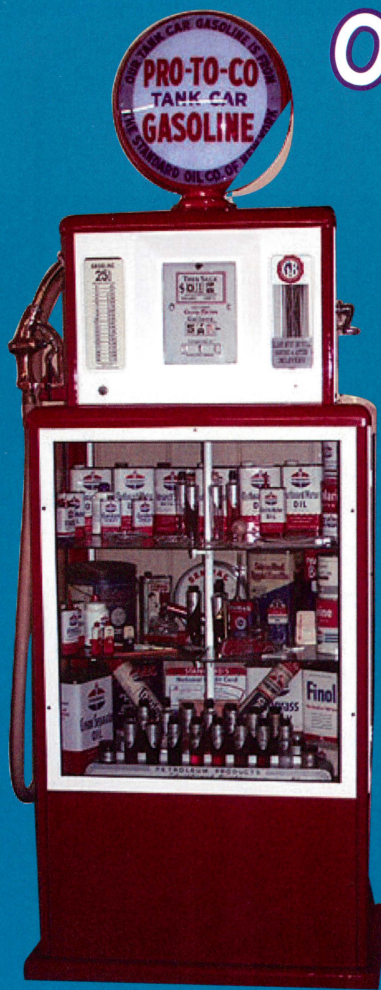
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by Preston Evans

(GAL 1287)



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SPRING 2011 CHICAGOLAND ANTIQU SLOT MACHINE, JUKE BOX & ADVERTISING SHOW BRINGS TOGETHER GLOBAL BUYERS AND SELLERS

by Jack Kelly



The Chicagoland show promoters and family members stopped to admire the jukebox display offered by Northland Jukeboxes and Restorations of North Branch, Minn. From left are co-promoter Penny Traynoff, son Sam, 14, Nic Greco 10, along with his mom and dad, co-promoters Dawn and Kevin Greco. Missing from the group was Bob Traynoff, who was convalescing at home from after a snowmobile accident but was "there in spirit" according to wife Penny. www.northlandjukeboxes.com

Once again, the semi-annual Chicagoland Antique Slot Machine, Jukebox and Advertising Show, brought together buyers and sellers from all over the United States – and foreign visitors from all over the world.

The spring gathering, held April 8-10 in St. Charles, Ill., saw a slightly smaller number of vendors than the November event but reflected sales that several said were "the best in many years."

Some dealers who discussed the sluggish antique buyer trends in recent years added happily after the Chicagoland show that "we may have turned the corner and are on our way back up."

"It's much better than last time," Pat Heuer of Richmond, Ill., said with a smile while showing off a pair of completely restored Jennings Sportsman gambling pinball machines priced at \$3,500 and \$2,880. When asked how long the restoration took he just laughed and said, "Too many hours." Heuer, a 10-year collector/ seller, quipped, "I quit drinking beer and picked up another bad habit."

"This is one of the best shows we've ever set up at" said Chad Keller, St. Louis Ball Bowler Co, of St. Louis, Mo., adding, "these are like minded people." Keller, along with

owner Chris Pflieger, teamed up to quickly sell a pair of coin-operated bowling machines, a 1964 24-foot-long 1959 Majestic Bowler for \$10,500 and a 16 foot-long Chicago Coin Big Ball Bowler for \$8,500.

Also reporting brisk sales was 12-year show veteran Mike Weller of Cantrall, Ill., stating, "It's been a great weekend." The dealer is known for a selection of oddball original items and this time showed off an 1830-40 gambler's .55 caliber mm pistol complete with spring-loaded "dirk" or bayonet on the barrel. The 14-inch-long pistol could be displayed at your place for \$1,500.

Twenty five year show veteran Al Araiza and wife Peg traveled to the show from Cushing, Okla., bringing along a "man size" upright early 1900s Watling Owl slot machine priced at \$10,500, an oddball World War I staff sergeant's folding military desk with chair for \$650, and a turn of century cast iron cigar tip cutter with lighter for \$1,880.

Much smaller slots were offered by a dealer known as “Mr. Q.T.” because of his dealing in 1930s Mills Q.T. Slot Machines. Ed Wolff of McHenry, Ill., didn’t disappoint as he showed off nine different models and sold two during the show. The popular junior size machines were priced from \$1,880 to \$3,000 each.

Shoppers and dealers alike stopped to admire and weigh themselves on the vintage scales offered by Bill and Jan Berning of Genoa, Ill. Of special interest was a restored 1950s Hamilton Scale with a 44-inch-tall bottle of R.C. Cola soda pop perched on the front, with weight numbers visible through a window on the bottle cap priced at \$5,800. Also drawing attention at the same spot was a 6-foot-tall all original “lollipop” large face Watling Gambling scale just off location in Texas that could work at your home for \$1,500.

Those searching for jukeboxes could find many models at the April event.

Older restored jukes were shown by John Papa of National Jukebox Exchange, Mayfield, N.Y., including a 1948 Wurlizer 1100 for \$6,500 and a 1940 Wurlitzer 800 for \$8,500. Each offered a selection of 78 rpm records – at just a nickel per tune.

Those with a taste for 1950s jukes hovered around the booth of Northland Jukeboxes, North Branch, Minn., checking out the fully restored 1954 Seeburg “R” that played 45 rpm records for \$6,295. And for better sound you could add an all-original 1950s Seeburg “teardrop” speaker for \$500.

Vintage coin operated machines were mixed with earlier advertising signs displayed at the April event by Steve Mumma of Des Moines, Iowa. Although Northwestern 33 peanut machines are not rare, the dealer displayed three different color models, complete with original one cent vending labels tagged \$425 each.

“This one is going in my collection” said Erick Johnson with a smile, who traveled to Chicagoland from Phoenix, Ariz. His “fantastic find” was a 22-inch-tall 1890s penny operated cast iron and oak perfume vendor that Johnson said was “100 percent complete and original.” The device, whose price was not disclosed, was manufactured by the U.S. Automatic Perfume Co. of Cincinnati, Ohio.

It was a long drive to St. Charles for dealer Jim Whitaker of Lynwood, Wash., who showed off a booth full of unusual collectables including a 16-inch-tall Hawaiian grass skirt girl table lamp with rotating hips that could dance for you for \$995. The dealer called Chicagoland “a most interesting show.”

John Deere and toy collectors hovered around the booth of Russ and Sharon Whitmore for a close look at a 14-inch-long 1930s cast iron horse and wagon with the famous Deere name priced at \$1,800. The couple operate a full-time an-

tique shop, Wandering Past, in Nashville, Ind. Russ, a first-time Chicagoland dealer, said, “Oh yeah, I like it,” when asked about the event.

“This is fun stuff” said one visitor walking into the booth of Paul Voska of Perrysburg, Ohio. The dealer pointed out a smiling 2-foot-tall hard rubber elf figure, circa 1930s, for \$400 and an oddball 1940s 3-by 4-foot tin sign advertising dog food made with horsemeat priced at \$1,200.

Visitor Brian Estep set up at the show to promote the well-known firm of Morphy Auctions of Denver, Pa. Estep said his firm will be auctioning off 300 lots including many rare coin-op items owned by longtime collector Bob Levy on Sept. 3. He added that “many people stopped by my booth to talk about consignments to coming auctions.”

Others came to Chicagoland to browse and buy. Patrick and Kristin Scoleri and daughter, 2-year-old Kiley, said “We shop it every year,” adding, “We have three jukeboxes at home.” The Elmwood Park family was walking slowly through the crowd as Kristen was pregnant and was expecting to deliver another family member, a girl – in just six days!

It was an eight-hour plane ride for first time visitors Louis Dewasmes and Laurence Peyrelade from Paris, France. Dewasmes collects coin operated machines as a hobby and assists in operating a Paris antique shop run by Peyrelade with an accent on industrial design objects, which also are popular in the United States. The French collector said he was limited in purchasing only parts, tokens and paper items because import of gambling items is prohibited. Asked about his first impressions of the show, he said “It’s unbelievable,” adding, “Oh yes, we plan to return.”

As with many facets of the antique collecting hobby, the coin-op collector group seems to suffer from a lack of interest from some younger people. So one family has begun a grass roots effort to generate interest by the younger set. The Jim Faulkerson family, ages 8 years and up, from St. Louis, Mo., sported T-shirts stating “No youth, no Chicagoland” on the front and “save the coin-ops” with a picture on the back. “This is not for money, it’s for the passion of the hobby, we want it to last forever” said the elder Faulkerson, who invited interested people to phone 314-256-1360 or email: jfaulkerson80@yahoo.com.

The next Chicagoland Antique Slot Machine Jukebox and Advertising show will be held in St. Charles, Ill., on November 11, 12 and 13.

Dealers can get information from co-promoter Bob Traynoff at 1-847-244-9263. Show information also is available from co-promoter Kevin Greco at 1-815-353-1593 and also at www.chicagolandshow.com.

See next page for photos ➡



Dealer John Papa of Mayfield, N.Y., gives the thumbs up sign showing for his 1948 Wurlizer 1100 and his 1940 Wurlitzer 800 that could spin 78 rpm records in your home for \$6,500 and \$8,500 respectively .



Louis Dewasmes and Laurence Peyrelade of Paris, France, look over items in the booth of dealer Al Araiza of Cushing, Okla.



Small fry Madison Hoy, age 5, checks her weight on the unusual 1950 R.C. Cola bottle-shaped penny scale shown by Bill and Jan Berning of Genoa, Ill.



Paul Voska of Perrysburg, Ohio, hams it up next to a 1930s hard rubber elf figure priced at \$1,200.



Shopper Josh Stoneberg, Rockford, Ill., checks out the neon tattoo sign offered by Susan and Rod Bartha, Riverwoods, Ill. The 34-year-old browser said he has been in the tattoo business for 15 years and has been restoring furniture since he was 14 years old.



Kiley Scoleri, age 2, holds tightly onto her father Patrick Scoleri of Elmwood Park, Ill., while checking out vintage advertising signs at the show.



Angela Maestas of Lincoln, Ill., tries out one of two 1931 Jennings Sportsman coin-operated pinball machines in the booth of Pat Heuer, of Richmond, Ill.



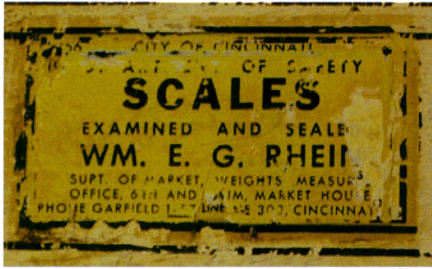
The Jim Faulkerson family of St. Louis, Mo., show off front and rear views of the T-shirts they designed to promote interest in coin-op machine collecting in younger people.

Ed Wolff, known as "Mr. Q.T.," showed off a row of the popular junior size payout slot machines, priced from \$1880 to \$3,000. He brought them to the show from nearby McHenry, Ill.



Another 'Lucky Ducky' Find

By Johnny Duckworth



Do you ever feel that all the rare coin operated machines have been pulled out of the dark deep holes in which they lurk? Back in the early “hay days” great finds seemed to happen almost weekly or even daily according to many old collectors in the coin operated hobby; now these finds seem to take years. We have all been bitten by the coin-op bug as we search for that killer old machine that has been tucked away. However, with a little luck and a lot of determination, amazing finds still happen.

This coin operated scale turned up in a little town in Michigan. The consignor had been cleaning out his late grandfather's estate and hauling everything off to the local auction house when I found out about the scale. I could remember reading about this rare machine in a C.O.C.A. article written by Jim and Merlyn Collings (March 2003) as well as Bill Howard's book *Every Picture Tells a Story*.

When I had first laid eyes upon the scale in photos, I could see that it had been in the barn for quite some time. The upper mirror and pointer were long gone so the scale looked a little neglected. I made several phone calls to Jeff Storck to pick his brain and learn more about the scale. A huge scale collector and dealer, Jeff owns hundreds of scales. He assured me that if all the golf apparatus remained intact and in good condition nothing else would matter. Fortunately, parts for the scale portion could be obtained by searching out for another similar yet rare model that the scale company produced.

I offered to buy the scale from the auction company, but they wanted to do more research and find out a value before they made a decision. After a little over a week, they decided it would be best to place the scale in their upcoming auction on Saturday. That was only three days away and to top it off they don't take phone bids. I had to get up to Michigan right away and try to purchase this machine.

Even though the drive took twelve hours, it didn't seem so long with my dad riding along with me. He

asked me several times along the way up, “What if we drive all this way and you don't get the scale?” This was something constantly on my mind, but nothing I wanted to dwell upon. I was excited that the scale would finally be for sale but on the other hand you don't always win at auctions, especially if someone else wants the item as badly as you do.

The following morning we arrived at the auction house when they first opened to look the scale over. The consigner had hauled in a mutoscope clam shell and a mechanical slot machine as well as the scale. I talked with one of the auction owners to find out what else could still be in this old barn. They informed me that the barn had been completely cleaned out, and nothing else remained.

I tried once more to buy the scale in order to not wait around for the auction the next day. I was told the machines would go to auction unless I wanted to talk with one of the auction owners who list their items on Ebay. He had picked the items up from the consigner and could make the final decision. We waited around a good hour for him to show up for work. When he finally showed up, I began negotiating a price. After fifteen or twenty minutes of conversing, I managed to purchase the scale before it made its way into the auction.

I still find it hard to believe, but with all of the time delays and small issues I encountered, I had this incredible scale bought before the auction even started and loaded into the truck. I have been called “lucky ducky” in the past by turning up rare machines, but this time I truly felt lucky. Ever since operators pulled these out-of-date Fair Weigh Golf Scales off of their routes, collectors have only found two of these machines, with mine now becoming the third.

The Colonial Scale Company produced this machine in Boston, Massachusetts in the 20's and into the early 30's. They applied for the golf mechanism patent on December 30, 1930, receiving it on December 5, 1933. Some say that this scale has been considered one of the greatest novelty scales ever produced because it

incorporates an arcade machine within the scale. The golf theme in the lower portion of the scale gives the patron the opportunity to gamble after weighing themselves, thus presenting the opportunity for them to get their penny back and receive their weight for free.

When you step on the foot plate of the scale the dial always moves, making this scale all the more interesting. The numbers on the dial are hidden as a little red sign remains raised to cover them while not in use. When you drop your penny into the coin slot on top it falls into a balanced arm where the weight of the coin drops the sign down reading "weight shown here" so you can view your weight. When finished, stepping off the plate kicks your coin out and the red sign returns back into place. Your coin then falls into the top section of the golf mechanism tee'd up and ready for play. Finally, with a quick turn of the knob on the right side of the play field you can hit your penny with a miniature golf club trying to knock it through one of the four holes on the left. If you're skilled enough to make it through one of the four holes, your penny will fall down, ring a bell, and come out into the coin return at the bottom of the door. If not it will fall into the lake and into the operator's cash box inside.

Strangely enough, all three Fair Weigh Golf Scales have surfaced in Michigan, begging the question, could

it be possible an operator had several of these on his route? According to Red Meade, The Colonial Scale Company only produced 11 of these golf scales. The first scale to surface has serial #757, pulled originally from a penny arcade in Michigan. The arcade owner had stripped all the white paint off, added columns on the sides, and stained the cabinet to match his arcade decor. Christopher Steele purchased this machine in Chicago around 1977 for his collection. The Bill Howard collection contains the second golf scale found, with serial #543 stamped on it. This scale originally turned up in the Fox Theater in Detroit, selling to a couple different collectors before Bill acquired the machine for \$25,000 at the Red Meade auction in April 1999.

The latest golf scale to surface, #538, looks to have spent some time in the Cincinnati, Ohio area as well. While restoring the machine some city decals surfaced underneath the top layer of paint from 1949, 1956, 1958, and 1959. Scale collector and dealer Bill Berning turned up a non-golf version of the Colonial scale in Philadelphia, also uncommon; this scale fortunately had all the parts needed to complete the golf scale recently acquired.

Now that three Fair Weigh Golf Scales have made their way to the surface, one must ask-could there be 'fore'?



*NOTE: A Double Treat on the Fair Weigh Golf ----
Bill Howard has also sent a story on his Fair Weigh adventure....Enjoy!*

FAIR WEIGH GOLF SCALE

- THE FUN IS IN THE PICK-UP -

Dealer and friend Jack Freund has written several articles under the heading "The Fun is in the Hunt" when discussing experiences involved in the collecting of coin-operated machines. When it comes to the wonderful Fair Weigh Golf Scale, featured on page 160 of my book, Every Picture Tells a Story, I think of a variation on this theme, because in this case, the fun was in the pick-up. As indicated in my book, this is the only known complete or working example of the Fair Weigh Golf Scale - arcade machine, which I believe to be the greatest American Golf Machine ever made. It was manufactured by the Colonial Scale Company, and its history has been well documented by other authors (see Drop Coin Here, March, 1999, issue as well as Jim Collings article in the March, 2003, C.O.C.A. magazine), so this article will be devoted solely as to how I came to acquire and pick-up my treasure.

In my book I credit my partner, Bob "B.P." Peirce, Mike Gorski, and Mike Galvin for the help they afforded me along the way, and the story goes as follows.

As a collector who specializes in rare American Golf Coin-Op Machines, I had been waiting years for the opportunity to purchase the Fair Weigh Golf Scale. Consequently, when I discovered that this only complete and working example, owned at the time by the leading scale collector in the country, Red Meade, was to be offered at auction by James Julia in Maine, I rushed to my mentor, Mike Gorski, for advice. The God Father made it clear to me that this would be



the one shot the ultimate owner would ever have to acquire this machine and that, in his opinion, the price would go "through the roof." The only comforting part of this advice was that, in Mike's opinion, the ultimate value of this machine would probably exceed the "roof" and become a proper and proud cornerstone to the collection of the eventual winner.

Time has proved Mike correct again, as his nickname suggests. Everyone else I consulted with, seemed to have a much more conservative opinion as to what it would cost to snare this treasure. In fact, I bet three friends a dinner that the ultimate cost of this example would be more toward Mike's estimate than theirs. As a consequence, I enjoyed three wonderful dinners at their expense. Don't bet against the God Father's advice.

Mike's advice caused me to turn to my partner, "B.P." Peirce, for arrangements to put up much of my stake in our partnership at the auction to cover my bid. I then had to contact good friend Mike Galvin to appear at the auction and bid for me after he had checked out its condition.

When Mike reported to me during a trial I was involved in that I was the successful bidder, I was elated until he gave me the rest of the news that my

winning bid was within \$100 of all the authority and money I had given him.

As years have passed, I have grown happier and more comfortable about the way things turned out. Without the help of these friends, I would never have been able to outlast the several underbidders.

Now the plot of this story thickens and answers the question as to why "the fun was in the pick-up."

To anyone who might not know the obvious, this is a huge, heavy scale, and it was sitting in Maine. As a result, I was elated to find out that old "B.P." was heading "out that way" and offered to have me come along for company and the opportunity to bring the scale home on the way back. A secondary treat for us was that I was to treat us to two huge lobster tail dinners somewhere along the coastline of Maine. Anyone who has spent time getting to know "B.P." or me know that food paves the way to our hearts.

The final chapter of this story begins with "B.P." pulling into my drive after he had embarked from Wisconsin. We were confident his small mini van would afford plenty of room as we pressed East with happy thoughts. All was well until we arrived at the Julia auction house. The auction staff was cordial, pointed us to the Fair Weigh Golf Scale, and wished us a happy return trip. It was at that point that old "B.P." began to realize just how big and heavy this scale was. But "B.P." always perseveres, and that is exactly what we did. "Onward and upward", as they say. I do remember that it was somewhere at this point that "B.P." reminded me that this was my scale, and not his. The auction house afforded us a dolly to maneuver my treasure to the back loading dock of the auction house. "B.P." then backed his van so that we could load the scale onto his van from the rear. As I stood in the back of the van to receive the scale from "B.P." while he stood at the open loading dock, we were greeted to a torrential downpour. I quickly took up the role of a dry Stan Laurel, while "B.P." took up the role of a very wet and troubled Oliver Hardy. Although we were able to get the scale into the van eventually, the drive from Julia's was somewhat strained. "B.P." drove while soaking wet as I looked on in the passenger seat in dry but none the less awkward silence. I then made the mistake of breaking this silence by suggesting how good it was that the rain had stopped. At this point the rage in "B.P." came out and he addressed me with some thoughts laced with obscenities Chauncer made famous. After a time I rebounded with one of my brighter suggestions - "Let's eat." As we moved on to our long anticipated great lobster fest a few miles away, "B.P." had been trying to contact a

still bank customer by phone and had been able only to leave phone messages. It was during the last of these attempts that my partner made what moved to be a grave tactical error, he left word for this customer as to where we would be eating.

At about 5:00 pm on that wonderful Saturday afternoon, "B.P." and I were in the midst of devouring two of the biggest and most scrumptious Maine lobsters you could imagine, when we were suddenly interrupted by his client. At this point "B.P." made the second of his tactical errors by announcing me as his friend, a domestic relations lawyer. The client then literally grabbed my hand and started pulling me across the street to his home. I looked aghast at "B.P." for help, but my still soaked friend offered me none. So, off we went. As we crossed the street I was made aware that his wife and he were going through a divorce, resulted in her snatching all furnishings from the home after she had worked over the front door with a sledge hammer to gain entrance. This was after she had assaulted him three times, the last involving a pair of scissors. This sad sack then insisted we peer into the window to bear witness to the fact that she had even stolen his best friend, the family dog - toys, food and all. As I began to sniff the lobsters we had left unattended, I took the liberty to ask this customer just what in the world his monster wife did for a living. I will never forget his response, "she's a psychiatrist." When "B.P." then asked me if I had any legal advice for his customer, I responded by pointing to the caved in front door and asked if the house had been declared as an historical home by the state. He replied that it had, and I suggested that he have her arrested for defiling one of Maine's historical landmarks, and then announced that I was returning across the street to finish my lobster tail. When "B.P." returned to dinner shortly thereafter, I told him that I did not want to hear any more about his earlier troubles in the rain and suggested that we order a second set of lobster tails.

And this is the true story about how my Fair Weigh Golf Scale managed to appear in our small kitchen along side the Chester Pollard Golf Arcade. My wife and I are the only ones to have this wonderful scale sitting next to a great floor model Football Arcade in such a small kitchen, something that she tends to remind me of on a frequent basis.

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